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Current Events

[Edited by Clarence W. Gleason, Roxbury Latin School, Boston, Mass., for the territory covered by the Association of New England and the Atlantic States; Daniel W. Lothman, East High School, Cleveland, Ohio, for the Middle States, west to the Mississippi River; Walter Miller, the University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo., for the Southern States; and Franklin H. Potter, the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, for the territory of the Association west of the Mississippi, exclusive of Louisiana and Texas. News from the Pacific Coast may be sent to Miss Julianne A. Roller, Franklin High School, Portland, Ore., and to Miss Bertha Green, Hollywood High School, Los Angeles, Cal. This department will present everything that is properly news—occurrences from month to month, meetings, changes in faculties, performances of various kinds, etc. All news items should be sent to the associate editors named above.]

Michigan

Battle Creek.—Miss Flora McKenzie, of the Latin department of the high school, writes:

I have been wondering whether you would be interested in a Latin play which the Latin department of our High School gave on the night of January 14. It is always hard for me to find anything “different” for the Latin students to present, especially something which will take in a large number of students.

The idea came to me this summer as I was reading over the introduction to a Caesar book, entitled *The Story of a Roman Boy*. With this as a nucleus I enlarged and adapted all the material possible and worked in the whole of the department, including nearly two hundred students.

The play was in the nature of a pageant, depicting the life of a Roman boy, from babyhood to full manhood, and Shakespeare’s “seven ages” for the entire span of life were multiplied by two to carry Lucius Cornelius Rufus up to the age of a soldier. There were ten main scenes, in most of which some bit of humor was worked in.

The first scene was the christening, followed by a nursery scene, in which one of the young girl singers crooned a real Roman lullaby. Then there was the playroom scene, followed by the schoolroom, over which a Caesar pupil was placed as *magister*. He lined off the first sentence of Caesar and received an enthusiastic response from the fifty or more boys seated on low benches. Other events were the counting to twenty with the use of an abacus, a short explanation of the calendar, the reciting of some of Virgil’s verse, a demonstration of the reading of a Roman scroll, and, last, the Latin version of “Mary Had a Little Lamb,” by one of the boys. Then a scene of Roman sports, such as wrestling, boxing, discus hurling, and a ball game. Each event was preceded by a short explanation of the difference between the Roman sport and our modern game derived from it. The arrival at the age of majority, or the donning of the *toga virilis*, with its accompanying ceremonies came next. Then the impressive ceremony of becoming a lieutenant in the mighty Caesar’s army. This was followed by a review of the army and a camp scene, in which spear men displayed their talent, a real testudo was formed and operated, a slinger showed his

talent, and the bowmen. Next a Sibyl was consulted as to the youth's success in love, which was followed by the wedding scene, and the festive dancing which was indulged in on such an occasion, where we worked in the development of the dance up to the bacchic revel. Back to camp again and the triumphal entry into Rome with Caesar and his victorious legions completed the scenes, leaving everybody massed on the stage. Then the Latin song of *Laudes atque Carmina* was sung, after which a picture was taken of the whole group.

Missouri

St. Louis.—The Classical Club of St. Louis completed its organization January 17 with the following group of officers: president, Professor F. W. Shipley, Washington University; vice-president, Father Murphey, professor of philosophy, St. Louis University; secretary-treasurer, Rosalie Kaufman, Cleveland High School; Executive Committee (in addition to the above): Maynard M. Hart, vice-principal of McKinley High School, Rudolph Detschen, University City High School; Program Committee: Principal Hart and Professor Eugene Tavenner, Washington University.

The organization of the club is meeting with so sympathetic a response from friends of the classics and the press that one is led to hope that the tide of anti-classical agitation is at last receding.

New York

The New York Classical Club.—In November, 1919, at the first meeting of the academic year 1919-20, formal addresses were delivered by Mr. Fred Irland, Official Reporter of Debates in the House of Representatives, and Professor Gordon H. Gerould, of the English Department of Princeton University. Mr. Irland is known to many classical teachers by his delightful article, "High Schools and Classics," in the *Atlantic Monthly* for July, 1919; he amplified for the club the points made in that article, speaking as an enthusiast for the English language and stressing the invaluable aid to good English provided by Latin study.

Professor Gerould offered the club strategical counsel, as to the proper line of defense for the classics. This line he thinks consists in active propaganda. "Do not apologize: advertise! Cry up your wares! Do not be modest and unassuming." He would have all classical teachers go out as champions, challenging the attention of the world till it understands "the living treasure" they offer.

Informal remarks on the fundamental value of Latin in any education were made by President Humphreys, of the Stevens Institute of Technology, President MacMillan, of Wells College, and Superintendent Straubenmüller, of the Department of Education of the city of New York. The last speaker assigned to Latin a distinguished place as a needed help in securing "quality" in American education.

At the second meeting of the club, in December, Professor Lodge, of Teachers College, spoke on "The Place of the Dramatic Art in the Teaching

of the Classics." Beginning with some remarks on the history of the rise of language, as a thing said and heard, not read, he maintained that the essential nature of any tongue is obscured if its *sounds* are not familiar to the student's ear, and tongue, and furthermore that spoken words themselves are incomplete as a means of expression, needing gesture and action to give them their full meaning. He thus indicated the value of simple plays, even mere scenes and *colloquia*, as a mechanism of instruction, leading the pupils, by means of familiarity with the sounds of Latin, to a clearer comprehension of the use of the language as an instrument of communication. He suggested that the teacher should compose "plays" himself, adapted to his own pupils, and also gave a list of books published in recent years which provide suitable material.

Ohio

Cleveland.—On April 6, Tuesday, of Easter week, a classical conference of Catholic educators and teachers will be held at Hotel Hollenden, Cleveland. The purpose of this meeting is the establishment of a permanent classical league to promote the study of Greek and Latin in Catholic educational circles.

At this meeting papers will be read on the following subjects: "What Is Being Done Outside Catholic Circles for the Advancement of Classical Studies?" "The Ideal Training of the Teacher of the Classics"; "Classical Propaganda"; "The Teaching of First-Year Latin and Greek"; "Classical Authors in High School"; "Insistence on the Literary Spirit in College Courses." Although this meeting will be held primarily to deal with problems pertaining to Catholic educational institutions, yet anyone interested in Greek and Latin study will be welcomed at this gathering.

Pennsylvania

Muhlenberg College (Allentown).—Muhlenberg College still requires at least two years of Greek in college, as well as two years of college Latin, for the degree of A.B. A.B. students who do not present Greek for entrance are required to take three years of Greek in college. Over half of the students are candidates for the degree of A.B. The college has been able to maintain this standard, not without opposition.

To meet the practical needs of modern education two new courses were introduced this year, with marked success. The first of these is a course in scientific Greek, open to all scientific students. The aim is to give the foundation of Greek necessary for the understanding of scientific terminology and for the formation of new terms. The second is a course in Greek and Roman civilization, required of Sophomores who are candidates for the degree of Ph.B. Neither Greek nor Latin is required of these students. The aim of the course is to make the student appreciate in some measure our debt to ancient culture and civilization.